

REMARKS

This preliminary amendment is submitted simultaneous with the filing of a Rule 53(b) continuation of pending Application Serial No. 09/301,068, filed April 28, 1999 (now under appeal), which is a continuation of Application Serial No. 09/017,169, filed February 2, 1998 (Now U.S. Patent No. 6,055,567).

The title and abstract are amended to better reflect the invention to which the present application is directed.

As originally filed, the grandparent '169 application included claims 1-99. Claims 1-99 are canceled and new claims 100-105 are added by this preliminary amendment.

Claims 100-105, as presented in this application, are identical to claims 103-105, 110, 114 and 121 which were previously presented and deemed allowable in the parent '068 application, but which were cancelled from the '068 application in view of the appeal of the final rejection of other claims pending in the '068 application. No new matter is added.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and an early indication of the same is courteously solicited. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone at the below listed local telephone number, in order to expedite resolution of any remaining issues and further to expedite passage of the application to issue, if any further comments, questions or suggestions arise in connection with the application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 01-2135 and

please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
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